(b) Fiscal incentives as envisaged under the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Act, 2005, are available to all the States and Union Territories, including West Bengal.

Effect of rupee appreciation on tea exports

2030. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether tea exports had been further hit by the rupee appreciation;

if so, the details thereof during the last two years;

the revenue generated from such exports; and

the steps being taken to boost tea exports from the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) During the current year export of tea declined mainly due to appreciation of Rupee vis-a-vis dollar and poor exports to countries like Iraq (due to payment problem), Pakistan, Kenya and United Kingdom etc. The details of exports of tea from India during the last three years and the revenue generated from exports are furnished below—

Year	Financial Year-wise	
	Qty. (M. Kgs.)	Value (Rs. Crs.)
2004-05	205.81	1924.71
2005-06	96.67	1793.58
2006-07	218.15	2045.72
2007-08 (Apr-December)*	112.34	1111.54
2006-07 (Apr-December)	173.78	1629.18
(+) or (-) over last year	(-) 61.44	(-) 517.64

Estimated and subject to revision

(d) The Tea Board/Govt. are taking various measures to boost the export of tea which include conducting promotional activities in the foreign markets and lending promotional support to Indian tea exporters in their marketing efforts. These activities include: participation in international and/or specialized fairs and exhibitions, field sampling at speciality stores and/or principal markets; media publicity- buyer-seller meets; public relation activities to establish closer link between importers and exporters; and exchange of tea delegations between India and tea importing countries. Tea Board's overseas offices at London, Moscow and Dubai are making efforts to promote Indian tea in these potential markets.'

Tax rebates to exporters

† 2031. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal of providing the advantage of both State and Centre tax rebates to exporters;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

if so, the details thereof and the industries to be benefited therefrom; and

since when the advantage of getting rebate from these taxes will be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) It is stated principle of the Government that all indirect taxes linked to export need to be rebated. Central Government indirect taxes on inputs are rebated by way of duty neutralization schemes such as Advance Authorization/DFIA Scheme, DEPB, Duty Drawback etc. There is no decision to rebate State Taxes to exporters (except already available facility of rebate of CST for units operating under EOU/SEZ/STP/EHTP/BTP Schemes).

Revenue losses due to concessions to SEZs

2032. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

the estimated revenue losses due to exemptions and concessions to the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for next five years; and

the detailed breakup of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) No such estimates have been made by this Department. However, the quantum of exemptions i dependent on the investments, exports and profits generated there from by the Developers and units.

Technical support to diamond and gold producing African nations

2033. SHRIMATI HEM A MALINI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that India *suo moto* offered technical support in skill training help to top diamond and gold producing African nations including South Africa; and

if so, the reasons therefor and how and to what extent India will be benefitted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) As per available information, during the meeting of the India Tanzania JTC, held in New Delhi on 16—18 May,2007, the Tanzanian side appreciated India's strength in gem cutting, polishing and the jewellery sector and further indicated that Tanzania would encourage Indian industry to establish commercial units of precious and semi precious stones including gemstones, diamonds and gold. The Indian side offered to consider proposals for training in gem cutting and polishing for Tanzanians in India.

Further, during the meeting of the India-Namibia JTC in Feb. 18-19, 2008 in Namibia, the Namibian side emphasized the need for processing minerals within Namibia which could include participating by Indian joint venture companies. The Indian side indicated that Indian business interests in the gem and jewellery sector could be encouraged to set up joint ventures to beneficiate natural resources.